

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 28 MARCH 2021

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans and English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively on HF and various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed on Echolink by Johan, ZS6JPL. The audio bulletins can be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za while the text bulletin can be downloaded from <https://sarlnewsbulletin.wordpress.com/>. To join the Mailchimp bulletin mailing list, send an e-mail to the SARL Secretary.

In the news today:

RENEW YOUR AMATEUR RADIO LICENCE ON THE OLD SYSTEM NOW

FACING THE FUTURE OF AMATEUR RADIO

and

THE 80 M QSO PARTY AND THE RADAR CHALLENGE IN THIS WEEK

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

RENEW YOUR AMATEUR RADIO ON THE OLD SYSTEM NOW

The SARL met on Friday afternoon with the CEO of ICASA, Willington Ngwepe and other senior executives and discussed several issues pertaining to the renewal process of amateur radio licences. It was clarified that the old system of paying your licence still applies and amateurs are encouraged to pay their licences as before, making an EFT payment to the ICASA Nedbank account with their call sign and licence number clearly stated in the EFT. The deadline remains 1 April 2021. Make your EFT payment today or visit your bank on Monday to make the payment. The fees and bank details are on the SARL web at www.sarl.org.za. Remember your Club call sign and the Club's repeaters.

The process of registering your licence on the new system is a separate process with the current deadline of 1 May 2021. The CEO however agreed that ICASA has to, as soon as possible, make detailed guidelines available. On publication of the detailed guidelines, he will consider extending the May deadline. Mr Ngwepe said it was unreasonable to expect licensees to navigate the new system without proper information on how to do this. It was also clarified that where a HAREC licence, RAE certificate and HF assessment certificate are not available, a copy of the licence or a previous ICASA account can be uploaded.

During the hour-long virtual meeting, many of the other items on the agenda were not discussed. A further meeting will be held after Easter. However, the question of type approval was briefly discussed. ICASA confirmed that draft type approval regulations will be published in the Government Gazette next week. The CEO urged the SARL to study the draft and submit comments.

It is expected that the draft regulation will address some of the problems radio amateurs have experienced. The SARL will publish the draft regulations when received and arrange an online workshop to get input from the radio amateur fraternity.

THE SARL 80 M QSO PARTY ON 1 APRIL

The popular SARL 80 m QSO Party is on the air from 17:00 to 20:00 UTC (19:00 to 22:00 CAT) on Thursday 1 April. It is a phone only contest and the exchange is your call sign, an RS report, and your name. You earn 10 points for every contact with a South African station and 15 points for every contact with a station outside South Africa. Log sheets in MS Excel format ONLY must be submitted by 23:59 on Tuesday 6 April 2021 by e-mail to louis.zs5lp@gmail.com and zs5d@durbanarc.org.za. The rules are on page 92 of the 2021 Blue Book.

FACING THE FUTURE OF AMATEUR RADIO

IARU Region 1 has started preparations for a workshop to look at the future of amateur radio. The IARU Region 1 asks, "What is amateur radio today?", "How is it changing?", "Where are tomorrow's amateurs?", "How do others see Amateur Radio?" and "What do we need to do for the future?"

On Wednesday, 24 March, IARU Region 1 EC together with its Member Societies started preparing, with a Workshop focusing on the future of amateur radio. The message being shared in this session is clear. IARU societies are losing members; the loss of members in some societies is remarkable in the last ten years, even with good examination throughput. Next to this, persons in leadership roles in these societies are getting older. Not all Member Societies have top team members under the age of 35 years.

The IARU Region 1 Executive Committee shared that it is time for change, we need to start moving forward working together and changing the current trends. We need to refocus our thinking and way of operating.

The Workshop "Facing the Future" is scheduled to be held in October 2021 hopefully in Novi-Sad, Serbia hosted by SRS, the Serbian Amateur Radio Society. A virtual alternative Workshop will be prepared as well.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

HAM RADIO FRIEDRICHSHAFEN CANCELLED

Mentioning the "current developments regarding the spread of Covid-19" and the "uncertainties in the travel sector," the Messe Friedrichshafen announced on 26 March that Ham Radio will not take place on 25 - 27 June as planned. Once again, the DARC is organizing an online event; detailed information is expected in due course.

CONTEST NEWS

The first RaDAR Challenge of 2021 takes place on Saturday 3 April and you can select the four hours you want to be active between 00:00 UTC to 23:59 UTC (02:00 to 01:59 CAT). You may use all the amateur bands including cross band contacts via amateur radio satellites using CW, SSB, FM, or any legal amateur radio digital mode. The WARC bands are included. The exchange is your call sign, your name, an RS(T) report, and your grid locator – a 6 figure locator is acceptable, but the 8 or 10 figure is preferred. Log sheets must be submitted by 23:59 CAT on Thursday 8 April 2021 by e-mail to edleighton@gmail.com. Turn to page 101 in the 2021 Blue Book for the rules.

Thirty-two logs were received for the SARL National Field Day held on 13 and 14 March. Unfortunately, two logs were received 6 days after the closing date.

Class A: Multi-Operator Field Station

1st the West Rand ARC, ZS6WR – 257 186 points

2nd the Sandton ARC, ZS6STN – 163 466 points

3rd the Highway ARC, ZS5HAM – 101 294 points

Class B: Multi-Operator Field Station QRP

1st the Mooirivier ARC, ZS6MOI – 21 470 points

Class C: Single Operator Field Station

1st Schalk, ZS1LL – 163 250 points

2nd Hugo, ZS6HP – 64 850 points

Class D: Single Operator Field Station QRP

1st Johan, ZS4DZ – 49 010 points

Class F: Backyard Stations

1st Nick, ZS1N – 120 050 points

2nd David, ZR6DM – 29 450 points

3rd Johan, ZS6JBZ - 7 560 points

Class G: General Stations

1st the Port Elizabeth ARS, ZS2PE – 18 650 points

2nd Theunis, ZS2EC – 10 770 points

3rd Kobus, ZS6BOS – 7 560 points

Thirteen logs were received for the SARL VHF/UHF Analogue contest held on 13 and 14 March. This was the first contest using the new rules.

Field Station

1st Christo, ZR6AUI – 48 378 points

2nd the West Rand ARC, ZS6WR – 8 144 points

Base station, single operator

1st Carl, ZS6CBQ – 47 375 points

2nd Pierre, ZS4PF – 25 222 points

3rd Michael, ZR4MF – 20 424 points

Thirty-eight logs, showing 552 QSOs, were received for the second SARL Wednesday 80 m Club Sprint held on 18 March. The organisers cannot be held responsible for the propagation conditions.

1st the West Rand ARC – 808 points

2nd the Boland ARC – 310 points

3rd the Bo-Karoo ARC – 256 points

1st Romeo, ZS6ARQ – 114 points

2nd Kobus, ZS6BOS – 83 points

3rd Hugo, ZS6HP - 81 points

4th Nick, ZS1N and Hans, ZS6KR – 78 points each

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. There are a couple of sunspot regions with simple magnetic configurations visible. No solar flaring is expected. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 10 to 30 m bands will especially during the late afternoons provide some good DX fun. For more information, please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za.

Finally, a diary of some upcoming events:

Today – The CQ WPX SSB Contest

30 March – The Secunda ARC meeting
 31 March – the April Radio ZS available for download
 1 April – The SARL 80 m QSO Party
 2 April – Good Friday
 3 April – The RaDAR Challenge
 5 April – Family Day
 10 April – Autumn QRP Contest
 17 April – The SARL Virtual AGM
 18 April – The World Amateur Radio Day

To conclude our bulletin, a recap of our main news story:

The SARL met on Friday afternoon with the CEO of ICASA, Willington Ngwepe and other senior executives and discussed several issues pertaining to the renewal process of amateur radio licences. It was clarified that the old system of paying your licence still applies and amateurs are encouraged to pay their licences as before, making an EFT payment to the ICASA Nedbank account with their call sign and licence number clearly stated in the EFT. The deadline remains 1 April 2021. Make your EFT payment today or visit your bank on Monday to make the payment. The fees and bank details are on the SARL web at www.sarl.org.za. Remember your Club call sign and the Club's repeaters.

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

We invite clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, in both English and Afrikaans, if possible, by following the News Inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items to be included in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly radio programme, Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 CAT. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band by courtesy of Louis, ZS5LP. A rebroadcast by Andy, ZS6ADY, can be heard on Monday evenings at 19:30 CAT on 3 620 kHz.

We welcome your signal reports, comments, and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS2B, edited by Herman Erasmus, ZS6CTA and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.